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IN DEFENSE OF ARMED STRUGGLE

In regards to the recent bombings by the F.A.L.N. it is important that we speak of it with a great amount of understanding and love for human life. We must put these events in an historical outlook. We must look at history and come up with an answer that is truthful, honest, and just. For we as a people are full of compassion and dignity.

From the beginning, since 1898, the relationship between the United States and Puerto Rico has been a violent one. They marched on the Island, going from town to town, securing their military power. They made us U.S. citizens in time to fight in World War I. In 1935 they shot at students and nationalists in Río Piedras, killing four of them. In Ponce, March 21, 1937, they killed 21 Puerto Ricans and wounded over 100 more, and we call it the "Ponce Massacre". By this time Don Pedro Albizu Campos was in jail, where he spent over 25 years of his life for the dignity and freedom of the Puerto Rican people. On October 31, 1950, the Jayuya Revolution takes place (and also in many other towns around the Island). Dozens and dozens of nationalists were killed, and more than a thousand were arrested. The following day, in Washington D.C. Oscar Collazo and Griselio Torresola attacked the Blair House with the intent of killing President Truman. Griselio Torresola was killed in the gun battle, and Oscar Collazo is still in jail. And so are Lolita Lebrón, Rafael Cancel Miranda, Irving Flores, and Andrés Figueroa Cordero,

who in March 1, 1954 attacked the U.S. Congress. More recently other Puerto Ricans have lost their lives at the hands of the repressive police force in this country. Two well known cases are those of Julio Roldán and Martin (Tito) Pérez. Both, supposedly,"hanged" themselves in jail.

This all goes without mentioning the cases of thousands of Puerto Ricans whose lives are being cut short by the lethal effects of the fumes coming from the petrochemical complexes on the South coast of the Island, specially in the area around Playa Guayanilla; it goes without mentioning those who had to abandon their land due to a violent economic pressure brought about by the so called "industrialization" of the Island; it goes without mentioning those thousands of Puerto Ricans who lost their lives, forced to fight in an unjust and imperialistic war in Vietnam. Why not mention those whose lives just waste away in prison, after being caught in the legal maze of this country?

Today our situation and our condition of living is below any standard. Many of us are forced to go on Welfare (we know that is the truth!), or on drugs (like methadone maintenance) that destroy the body. Our jobs, for those of us who have one, make no sense: we are not doing something we like, but rather something in order to survive. So we are killed away, slowly and sadly. So, what has really changed? Nothing, except maybe that the violence committed against the Puerto Rican people

has become more sophisticated.

But Puerto Rico, and the Puerto Rican communities in this country, are not the only ones suffering under the yoke of U.S. imperialism, which is always sustained by force. Our Black brothers and sisters also live under the same conditions of terror and violence, and the same applies to those White people and organizations in this country that struggle against U.S. imperialism. The same violence is also applied in other parts of the world, wherever U.S. imperialism exists: Vietnam, Latin America, Africa. The situation is the same worldwide: U.S. imperialism is the most brutal form of domination and violence that the world has ever known. Our country is a living example of such violence.

Compañeros y compañeras, friends of our struggle, the action that took place Friday, January 24, 1975, was a military action in retaliation for what occured in Mayagüez, Puerto Rico, on January 11, 1975. Today a six year old boy is in serious condition, and two young sons of the Island are dead as a consequence of that bombing, which was perpetrated by a Cuban exile group (gusanos). And who support such groups, the same way they support the Chilean junta, the Brazilian dictators, and the Thieu government in South Vietnam? Nobody else butthe F.B.I. and the C.I.A. This is being revealed in the best journals and newspapers of North America. The true nature of this government is slowly being unveiled; and it

is exactly the same nature that many people have denounced for years.

After the military action of January 24, who were the first people the F.B.I. went to see? The day after the F.B.I. visited the Carlos Feliciano family twice, and once more the following day. Friends of the Nationalist Party of Puerto Rico are still being approached and offered money for information. This government does not remember what Carlos Feliciano said: "Our history is very clear: we have confronted our enemy face to face, in the light of day. Like in Ponce, like in Jayuya, like in La Fortaleza, like in Blair House, like in the Congress of the United States."

From many sectors of this society, including many in the political left, have come the cry that it was a terrorist attack. For us, it was a military action. Terrorism is what the United States do to the people of Vietnam, Latin America, Africa, Laos, Cambodia, and to Blacks, Chicanos, American Indians, and our own people in this country. That is true terrorism!

Those on the left who saw this as a terrorist act, do not understand how sick and tired our people are of suffering violence at the hands of the U.S. imperialists, day in and day out. The language used by those in the left that talk about terrorism is exactly the same as that of the New York Times, Daily News, El Diario, etc. It is enough to hear it

from these sources. What the F.A.L.N. needs from these anti-imperialist groups and individuals is solidarity and support. This is not a time for divisions, but for unity. It is high time that we start extending our struggles, learning from each other, teaching each other, uniting always against our common enemy. It is time to coordinate military action with political action and vice-versa. It is time to declare all out war against U.S. imperialism. We see the F.A.L.N. as a group that has taken seriously what Che Guevara said in his message to the Tricontinental: "We must carry the war into every corner the enemy happens to carry it: to his home, to his centers of entertainment; a total war. It is necessary to prevent him from having a moment of peace, a quiet moment outside his barracks or even inside; we must attack him wherever he may be; make him feel like a cornered beast wherever he may move. Then his moral fiber shall begin to decline. He will even become more beastly, but we shall notice how the signs of decadence begin to appear... And if we were all capable of uniting to make our blows stronger and infallible and so increase the effectiveness of all kinds of support given to the struggling people - how great and close would that (bright) future be!"

The F.A.L.N. has open new opportunities for action, and a new vision of that bright future. It is time we stop evading the question of armed struggle!

This statement has two purposes. First of all, it is a statement of support for the military actions carried out by the F.A.L.N. Secondly, it is a call for unity in the left, specially the Puerto Rican left. It is time that we all recognize the fact that no one particular group has the monopoly of the struggle. It is imperative that we start a serious and honest dialogue in order to reach what Lenin called "a correct theoretical judgment of the new forms of struggle engendered by practical life". It is a lie to say that military actions, such as the last one, divide and weaken the movement of national liberation for Puerto Rico. Lenin is very clear on this issue: "It is not partisan acts which disorganize the movement, but the weakness of a party which is incapable of taking such acts under its control."

We can no longer ignore the fact that new groups, new revolutionaries are joining the struggle. It is our duty to support them, to help them, to establish dialogue and mutual understanding of each other's methods, to create unity, and together carry the war to the front door of the enemy, and so hastening the day of national liberation for our people. To that end we pledge ourselves. To that end we offer our own lives.

February 7, 1975

The Coordinating Committee of the
Nationalist Party of Puerto Rico
in the United States